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## **Our Voice: Community needs adult school to stay open**

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by the TP Editorial Board

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The Tracy Adult School is an irreplaceable part of our education system.

It's a place for students to learn English, where the mentally disabled can learn life skills, how our newest countrymen earn their citizenship, the last chance for many to gain a high school diploma. It teaches in ways and in subjects that simply aren't found elsewhere.

So when Tracy Unified School District proposed slashing funding for the adult school by hundreds of thousands of dollars because of the state's ongoing budget crisis, we worried for the future of the students who might be denied its education. Because without Tracy Adult School, there is a gaping hole in our local education system.

Luckily, we're happy to report that the adult school will survive at least one more year. And its director, Dave Pickering, says it's in large part because of the Tracy Unified trustees, who have given the adult school as much support as possible given the budgetary circumstances.

Though trustees on Tuesday will likely decide to cut \$900,000 from the adult school's \$1.3 million budget, Pickering said, they could also have planned to take money that the school saved from last year in anticipation of this year's cuts. By leaving that cash in the adult school's coffers, trustees made sure that it will at least continue to serve students in 2010-11 — albeit in abbreviated form.

We'd prefer trustees find that \$900,000 somewhere else — but in this time of budgetary high-wire acts, we realize that might be impossible. At least for this fiscal year.

Next year, the Tracy Adult School must get more robust funding, or we, as a community, risk losing it altogether. And that's a risk we don't want to take.

• *We want to hear what you have to say. Letters to the editor may be e-mailed to [tpletters@tracypress.com](mailto:tpletters@tracypress.com), mailed to 145 W. 10th St., Tracy, CA 95376, dropped off at the office or [submitted online](#).*